

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 25, 1972

Dear Mr. General Secretary:

I would like to express to you my appreciation for the courtesy and warm hospitality shown to Dr. Kissinger and his colleagues during his recent stay in Moscow. His reports to me while he was in Moscow had already indicated that the discussions were extremely useful. This impression has been strongly confirmed by the detailed oral report which Dr. Kissinger made to me immediately after his return. I am convinced that the ground is being successfully prepared for our meetings in May to which I look forward with keen anticipation and I was pleased to hear that you share this view. We have a unique opportunity to open a new and promising chapter in the relations between our two countries. This reflects not only the desires of our two peoples but of peoples everywhere. As we make progress in constructing relations of peace and cooperation, all mankind will benefit.

As regards specific matters, I welcome the spirit of progress with which you spoke to Dr. Kissinger. As he told you, this is precisely the spirit in which I and my Administration approach these matters also. What has been achieved on Dr. Kissinger's trip gives great promise; I am sure our talks will bring it to completion.

I know that in the period left before our meetings, both sides will intensify their work to ensure the success both

- 2 -

of us desire. My own preparations will benefit greatly from Dr. Kissinger's discussions in Moscow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard Nixon", written in a cursive style.

His Excellency
Leonid I. Brezhnev
General Secretary of the
Communist Party of the Soviet Union
The Kremlin, Moscow

Agreed Text of Announcement

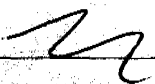
to be Made at Noon EST Tuesday, April 25

(8 p.m. Moscow Time)

Between April 20 and April 24, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, was in Moscow to confer with the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU Brezhnev and Foreign Minister Gromyko. The discussions dealt with important international problems as well as with bilateral matters preparatory to the talks between President Nixon and Soviet leaders in May.

Between April 20 and April 24, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs was in Moscow to confer with the General Secretary of the CPSU Mr. Brezhnev, Foreign Minister Gromyko and other Soviet officials. They discussed important international questions of interest to both governments as well as bilateral matters preparatory to the meeting between President Nixon and Soviet leaders in May. The talks were frank and useful throughout.

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23 April 1972

At the invitation of the Soviet Government, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, was in Moscow from April 20 to April 24, 1972. While there he conferred with the General Secretary of the CPSU, Mr. Brezhnev, Foreign Minister Gromyko and other Soviet officials. Their talks which were frank and friendly throughout dealt with the most important international questions of interest to both governments as well as with bilateral matters, preparatory to the discussions between President Nixon and the Soviet leaders in May.

US arm
22 April 1972

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~~Talks were held, which were frank and useful~~
~~throughout, as important~~

[By mutual agreement]

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In order to ~~address~~ address
issues (or questions)
~~matter~~ of common concern,

note: "matter" used later in
announcement

This Copy For _____

N E W S C O N F E R E N C E

#1419

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH DR. HENRY A. KISSINGER,
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR
NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS: AND
RONALD L. ZIEGLER, PRESS SECRETARY
TO THE PRESIDENT

11:42 A.M. EST

APRIL 25, 1972

TUESDAY

MR. ZIEGLER: Gentlemen, very quickly here, because this is an announcement that is being made jointly with Moscow at 12:00 Noon our time -- and I want to make sure that the wires are on the wire with it before 12:00 Noon -- Henry Kissinger is standing by to make a brief comment after I read the announcement. So we would ask you to hold your filing until he is finished, but if we move close to 12:00 Noon, we will break the briefing and allow you to file.

I will read the text of the joint announcement:

"Between April 20 and April 24, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, was in Moscow to confer with the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU Brezhnev, and Foreign Minister Gromyko. The discussions dealt with important international problems, as well as bilateral matters, preparatory to the talks between President Nixon and Soviet leaders in May."

DR. KISSINGER: I will take your questions. I thought I would make two very brief comments: One, how the meetings came into being; and two, a word about the conversations.

As you know, the President has been directly in touch with General Secretary Brezhnev on important international questions for several years. In the course of these exchanges, it was felt in the last few weeks that a more direct eNo Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/28 : LOC-HAK-230-5-2-8

Therefore, by mutual agreement, it was decided after full discussions here between the President, Secretary Rogers and myself that I should go for these discussions, which extended from Thursday evening, Moscow time, until Monday noon, Moscow time.

The reception I received was extremely courteous. The talks were frank and useful.

Now I will be glad to answer your questions.

MORE

#1419

Q Did you talk about Vietnam, Dr. Kissinger?

DR. KISSINGER: We agreed that neither side would reveal the subject of the talks, but I think you can draw your conclusions from an announcement which says that important international problems were discussed.

Q Dr. Kissinger, was Vietnam the principal reason for your going?

DR. KISSINGER: I cannot go beyond the text of the announcement; but the whole range of Soviet-American relationships was discussed, as well, of course, as particular emphasis to those issues that most immediately affect Soviet-American relationships at this moment.

Q What do you think happens to your credibility when the White House says you are at Camp David, and why the secrecy?

DR. KISSINGER: First, I spent yesterday afternoon and evening at Camp David with the President, indeed, returning with him to Washington around 10:30 last night.

Secondly, we are, at the moment, in a very delicate phase of international relations. It was felt by both sides to be desirable that there should be a minimum of speculation and a minimum of prior discussion until there was an opportunity to explore each other's views.

The announcement is being made less than 24 hours after my return to Washington. Therefore, there is a full disclosure of where I spent my time, and what was done.

Q Dr. Kissinger, was there any possibility before you went to Moscow that the President's trip would not take place?

DR. KISSINGER: None.

Q Dr. Kissinger, did Ambassador Dobrynin go back with you?

DR. KISSINGER: Ambassador Dobrynin was in Moscow at the same time I was.

Q Dr. Kissinger, looking back so soon and appraising whatever you did over there, was it satisfactory?

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They were frank and they were satisfactory, yes.

Q How did you go and how did you return?

MR. KISSINGER: I went by military plane in both directions.

Q Dr. Kissinger, did you inform the Soviets of any decision that the President had made for the future?

DR. KISSINGER: I know this is not too satisfactory to you, but we have agreed that neither side would go into the details of the talks. Obviously, one purpose of my going was to put before the Soviet leaders the considerations of the President on major international problems, as well as his thinking on the upcoming talks in Moscow.

- 3 -

#1419

Q Dr. Kissinger, then these subjects were not strictly related to the visit to the Soviet Union, is that right?

DR. KISSINGER: They dealt with all international problems, including those that will be raised on the visit.

Q When did the President first consider sending you and when was the decision made to send you?

DR. KISSINGER: The decision was made early in the week of my going. I don't have the exact date. It was based on a long meeting between the President, the Secretary of State, and myself, based on the exchanges that the President has been conducting with General Secretary Brezhnev.

Q Were you in communication with the President while you were there?

DR. KISSINGER: Yes, I was in very frequent communication.

Q Is the agenda and timing set and everything is still as has been previously announced, the arrival and so forth?

DR. KISSINGER: On the summit there have been no changes.

Q Is there any change in the advice that you are now giving the President as a result of tyour trip to Moscow?

DR. KISSINGER: I never discuss the advice that I am giving the President. You people might find out how uninfluential I am.

Q Can you tell us a little more about the nature of the exchanges between the President and Mr. Brezhnev, how they have been conducted, by correspondence, by Hot Line, or what?

DR. KISSINGER: They have been conducted on the whole by correspondence.

Q Are you optimistic that the Russians might stop supplying the North Vietnamese with equipment?

DR. KISSINGER: I don't want to make any judgment about what Soviet policy will be in the future.

THE PRESS: Thank you, gentlemen.

MR. Z. No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/28 : LOC-HAK-230-5-2-8
We will brief at 3:00 o'clock.

END

(AT 11:52 A.M. EST)

#1419

UPI-30

(MOSCOW MISSION)

MOSCOW--DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID TODAY COMMUNIST PARTY CHAIRMAN LEONID BREZHNEV INITIATED THIS WEEK'S TALKS WITH PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER HENRY KISSINGER AND THAT THEY LED TO THE U. S. DECISION TO RESUME THE PARIS VIETNAM PEACE TALKS THURSDAY.

THE HIGHLY QUALIFIED DIPLOMATIC SOURCES ALSO SAID BREZHNEV PLANNED TO DO MOST OF THE TALKING WHEN NIXON VISITS MOSCOW ON MAY 22.

THE DIPLOMATS SAID THE WHITE HOUSE AT FIRST THOUGHT KISSINGER WOULD BE TOO BUSY WITH OTHER WORK. WASHINGTON DEEMED THE KISSINGER TRIP UNNECESSARY, SINCE HIGHLY COMPETENT AMBASSADORS IN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW COULD HANDLE THE PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS.

BUT THE WHITE HOUSE LATER DECIDED TO ACCEPT BREZHNEV'S OFFER DUE TO THE GRAVITY OF THE VIETNAM SITUATION AND SIGNS OF INCREASING CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AS WELL AS THE POSSIBILITY OF A REJECTION OF WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR WILLY BRANDT'S OSTPOLITIK.

IT WAS ALSO ASSUMED THAT BREZHNEV AND KISSINGER WENT INTO THE DETAILS OF THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS IN VIEW OF EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR SADAT'S TRIP TO MOSCOW, SCHEDULED TOMORROW.

THE DIPLOMATS ALSO SAID WHEN NIXON BEGINS HIS STATE VISIT MAY 22, HE WILL SPEND MOST OF HIS WORKING TIME WITH BREZHNEV.

THE REST OF THE SOVIET TROIKA--PREMIER ALEXEI KOSYGIN AND PRESIDENT NIKOLAI PODGORNYY--AND FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREI GROMYKO WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSIONS, THE SOURCES SAID, BUT BREZHNEV WILL BE THE ACTUAL HEAD OF THE SOVIET TEAM. THIS IS IN SPITE OF PROTOCOL RULES THAT PODGORNYY AS TITULAR HEAD OF THE SOVIET STATE IS NIXON'S DIRECT OPPOSITE NUMBER.

4-26--SH1016AES